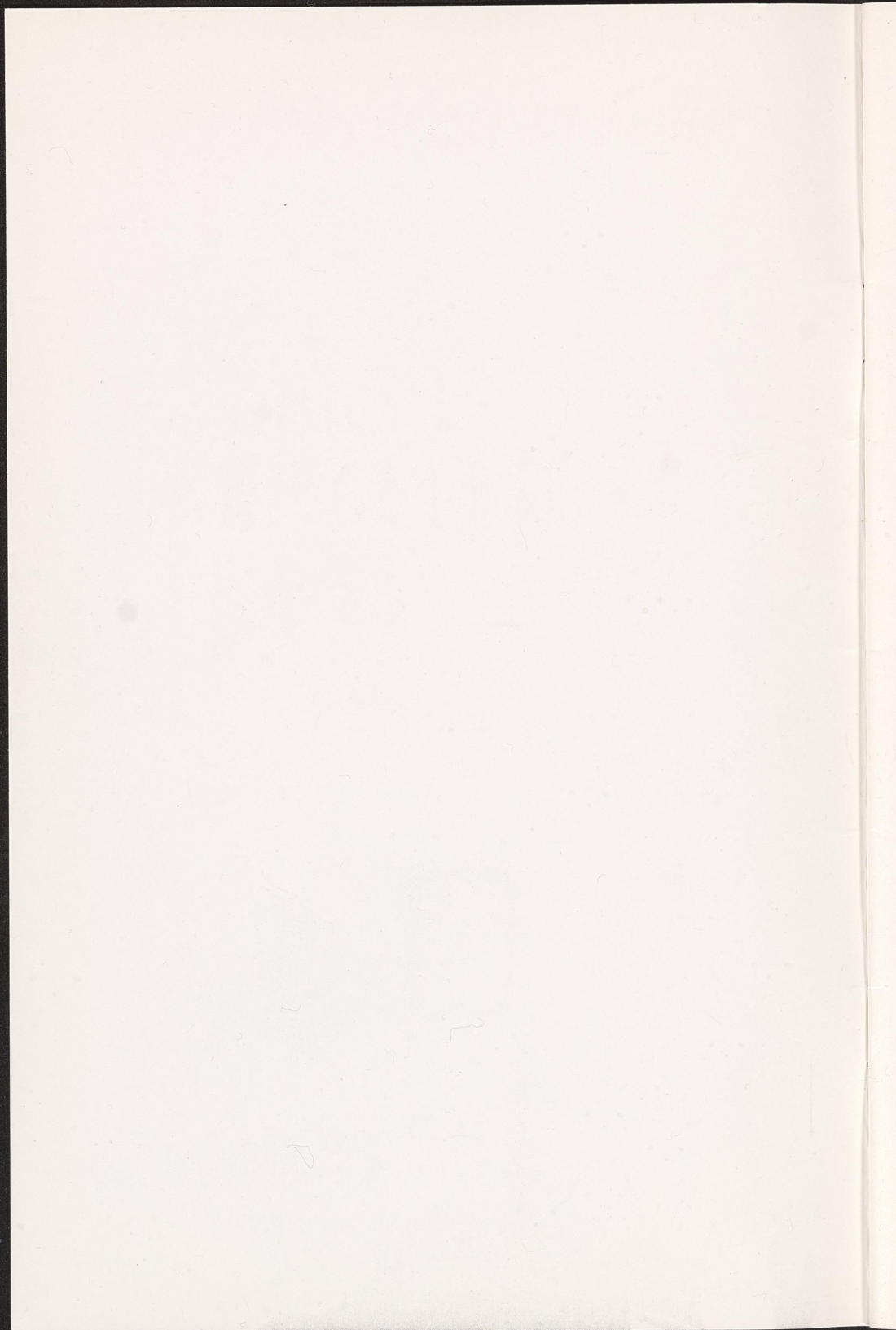


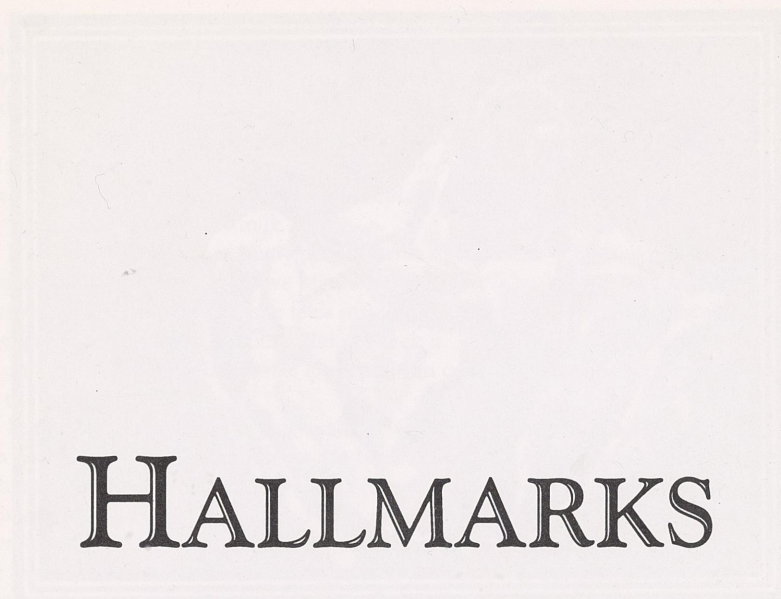
1994



HALLMARKS





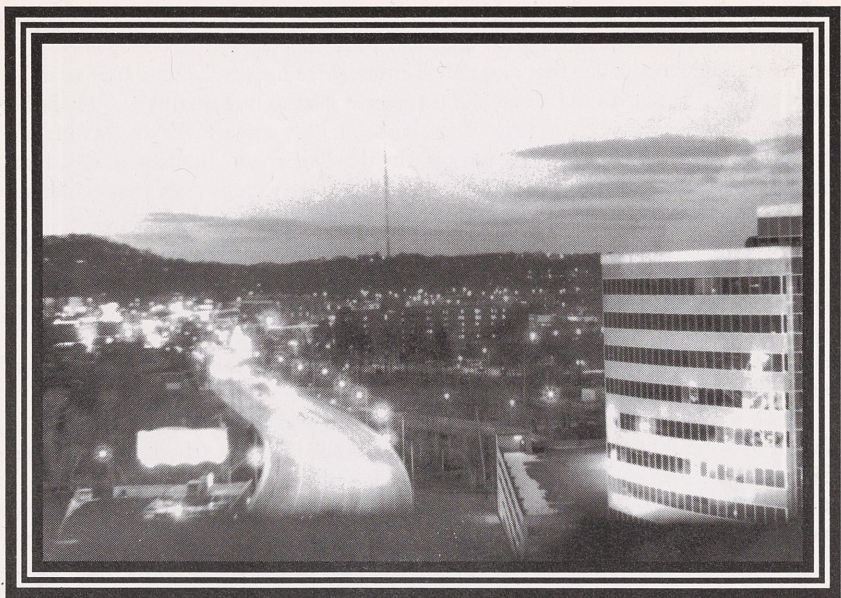


# HALLMARKS

## FALL 1994

COVER PHOTO BY LIZ LIGON (11)





JENNIFER CRANTS (12)

### GOODNIGHT, NONI

I want a baby now -  
Ready. No more waiting.  
Want to grow huge and have strangers place probing hands on my abnormality, that  
kicks me, her revenge.

I want to feel some thing moving and pushing.  
Is it like nausea or something softer?  
Will I notice or ignore?

I want to sing to myself, to her, we are the same, and play Joni and James records.  
Will she remember the songs - out here - outside, and smile or sleep, content.

I want to remember the pain;  
no drugs to take away a memory.  
How horrible are you?  
Cutting, Tearing, Dying.  
Will I rip to shreds?  
Not the same.

I want her to hear a man, a father, bewildered, humbled, ask all the questions I ask now.  
I am a woman, I should know, all the answers, not question.  
Stupid girl. Not yet. Soon.

KELLY WILLIAMS (12)



## CRUEL FATE

an Ode to a Lost Love

On going to the ice cream store one morn,  
I spied it through the window-peppermint!  
That flavor's gone for good—I could have sworn,  
but now it's back—it must be heaven-sent!  
I marched up to the counter right away  
And looked into the lazy scoop-girl's eyes  
And said, "One peppermint—make no delay  
Please serve me up a scoop of ample size."  
She handed me the purest form of bliss:  
I handed her a dollar eighty-nine.  
But heaven's blessing rays can start to miss  
As fast as they can quickly start to shine.

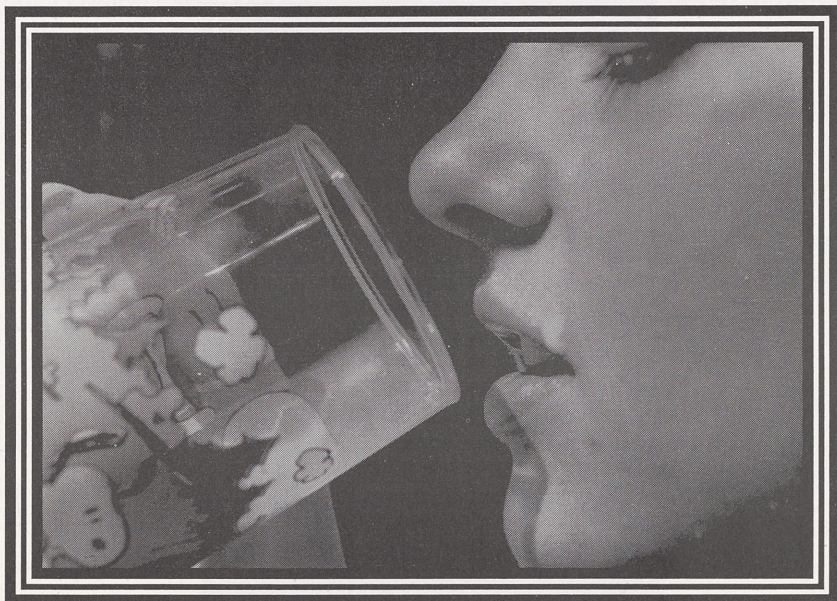
CR-RACK! My sugar cone went bliss or bust—  
My fallen angel, ice cream, bit the dust.

SARAH CHISOLM (11)

## THE MEET

The anticipation is building up,  
All you can think about is the gun shot.  
Once you start you just think of moving up,  
And try to remember what you were taught.  
And that girl ahead just won't let you pass,  
Even though your tired legs feel like they're lead,  
To beat your time you only have to pass,  
You just have to sprint up to get up ahead.  
Now that you've got that girl out of the way,  
You have to work on pacing your next mile,  
It sometimes seems like you have a long way,  
And as you pass the crowd you've got to smile.  
As you're running up the last grassy hill,  
You know you only need a bit of will.

MANDY BELDEN (9)



BETH HARDCASTLE (11)



## TEMPTATION'S GAME

Bruce Baron's Billiards was the hottest spot in town. Nothing compared to the smokey, loud atmosphere of the pool hall. Somehow, everyone's beer mug was always overflowing. Bruce was always sneakily sucking the money out of everyone, but no one cared. Money was always well spent at Bruce Baron's. His wife, Crystal, was always running around, teasing the regulars about their beer guts, telling the young men that older women like her were the best they'd ever have, and once you go older, you never go back. Yeah, they'd all play along, but once Bruce came along they'd all guzzle their beers and he'd smack them playfully on the back with enough force to warn them that another thought about his wife would get them some serious bruises.

But, while Crystal was attractive, his daughter, Delia, was the girl of their dreams. Her job was to clean up tables and clear dishes. She knew just how much to lean over, and when she carried bus tubs over her head, she was more than aware of how much of her stomach was revealed. Around her dad, she was an angel, but when he turned his back, her eyelashes fluttered, her hips swayed, and every now and then, she'd disappear out back. Her eyes called to the men for a little more than just company, but no one ever followed Delia back, until a stranger came through one day and decided to fulfill his dreams.

Bruce caught the stranger out back with Delia, and for once, the sound of billiard balls and blaring blues music was swept into the darkness as Bruce walked through the hall with bloody knuckles. It was understood that the blood was not his. Delia followed a few steps behind - her lips a little less fuscia - her face expressionless. But the stranger never showed his face again. No questions were asked. It was just understood that Delia was dangerous and some desires were never meant to be fulfilled. No one knew exactly what Bruce did to that stranger. The music just started up again, and smoke hung overhead like usual until the next stranger couldn't resist the temptation any longer. Danger disguised in beauty is enough to tempt anyone into a trap like Delia's. But the regulars, they just understood.

ANJALI SHENAI (12)



EMILY COWAN (12)



## THE EXECUTIONER

"Dark and light, bad and good, are not different but one in the same."

Heraclitus

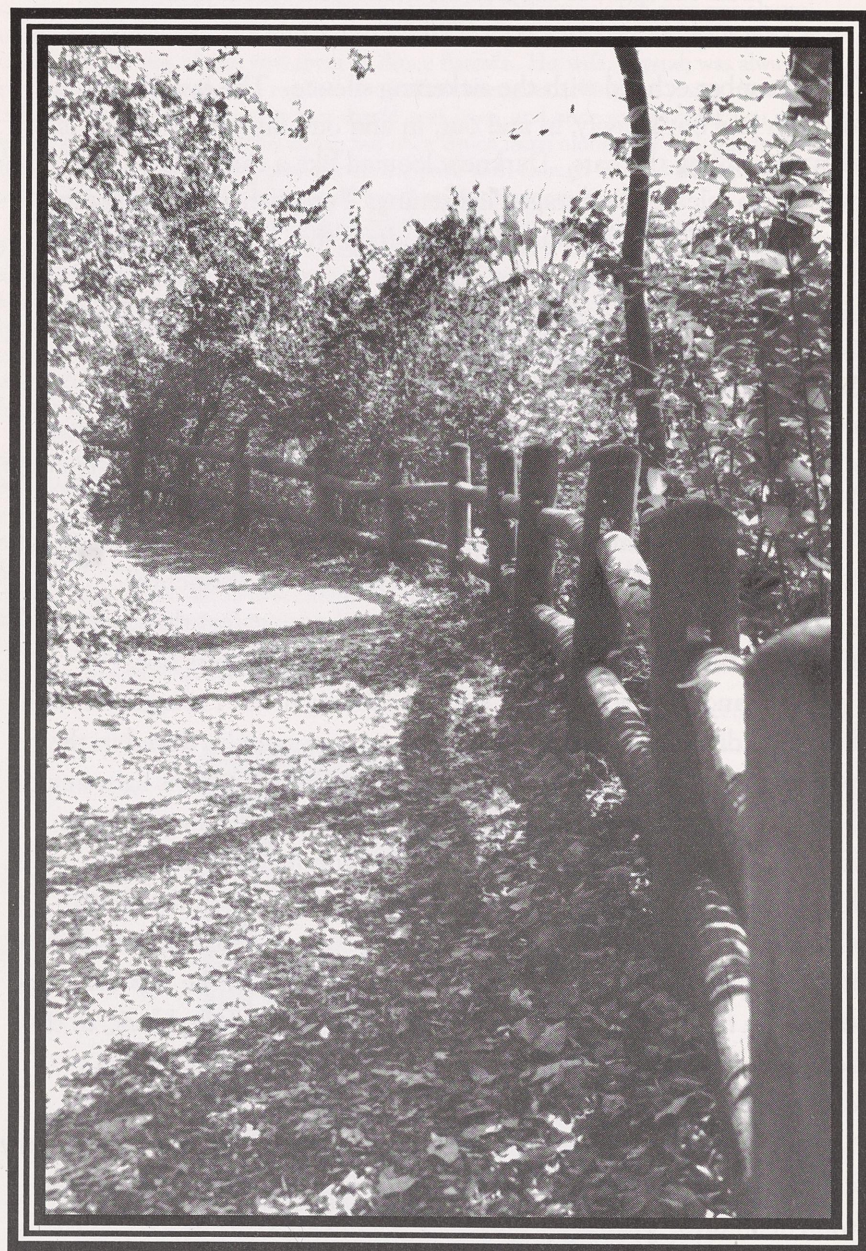
The chamber echoed with the sickening silence. The last breaths he drew in and out heavily, in and out, in and out, fainting sound of life dancing among the bars. Darkness loomed like a thick, dark cloud, waiting to release the enraged lightening. I crept through it, quietly, afraid of the blackness strangling me, afraid that he would hear and know. I know, though, that he knew. A single ray of light pierced the suffocating expanse of dark and stabbed him sharply through without bringing his death, yet, through the glass, I accidentally saw him. I hadn't wanted to. His eyes, black as the encompassing air were encompassed by a white like his glow white shimmering off the metal chair, off the iron clasps. He could not see me but looked directly at me, knowing that I was there, as if it was my fault.

I was, paid to murder, executing the cruel law. It wasn't though, one life for God knows how many. Right. Wrong. No distinction anymore. His eyes followed the top of my shoes against the concrete floor. My heart beat faster than his; I was scared; he was not.

My hand grasped the cold knob producing heat. I imagined it red, but I couldn't see. I closed my eyes, as my arm muscles flexed in their pull and stretch. Amid the darkness, I saw the transparent light among black, silhouetted figure with outstretched hands. Coming into the light, his face transformed. Black eyes lit with flaming flashing lightening. The figure shook back and forth, echoing in the death chamber, with the piercing scream cycling back around the bars, around inside my head. The outstretched hands clenched as the legs bent, and the figure fell, fell, fell. Through the white, black, white, black, to the red, red of the concrete blood gone black, of the handle of satan's draped robe.

I pushed the handle back to its original position and turned with my echo. My eyes moved to the light, inevitably, where he sat still with wide open eyes. No soul in the black circle that stared ahead, in the black circle of good, of law, of safety, of bad, of murder, of sin. Where will I go, the executioner?





RACHEL KRAFT (12)



## THE ASH PIT

For a moment which fled  
with the sunburned mist,  
I saw the radiance of pure light upon the land,  
before Nature made its horrific transformation.  
Leaves were dipped in gold,  
silver specked the dewy meadow,  
the birds no longer chirped,  
their songs clinked like coins.

Fitzgerald has cast his visions of decadence  
down to earth from his sparkling cloud.  
I recoiled, removing myself from Nature's market  
as if molten gold singed my skin.

I passed the scene of adulterated beauty  
with a child's hope  
of finding the lost dreamscape.  
Descending from a hill on a winding road,  
an ash pit of chestnut hue filled my eyes  
and overtook the meadow's life,  
like oil slicks over trembling water.  
It painted the surrounding hills and trees  
with horrific permanence.

My final refuge drew me in  
and called me to its conforming serenity  
Like Pearl I skipped to the illusive sun,  
but the encroaching cars  
and cacaphony of civilization  
obliterated the irretrievable moment.

KATIE SLOAN (12)

## WINDOW TO THE SOUL

I move: through the transparent wall of gloss

To the fields of layered snow, pale and pure:

Golgotha, where love transcends with the cross,

and swallowed by icy waves of wild allure,

Tossed to the cataract, rumbling rations

Of the black cave, dot among gorgeous rays

Penetrating, piercing, pulsing passions

Maze-like, losing me in the bright blue blaze.

Retrogressing in a flash, backward flight,

I see the visited destination,

Window to the soul, instrument of sight

Resting on the cheek-bed in contemplation.

One long stare into your blue, infinite skies

Gives life meaning; lost again in your eyes.

VARINA BUNTIN (12)

## THE COMMON EVOLUTION

The river flowing soft and silent through the valley;  
shrouded by the mist laid upon it at night.  
The spider's delicate works shift with the burden of nature's  
tears.  
For nature cries all night for the loss of her dear sun.  
The trees of age surround her; stand defending her from night.  
Light peaks out from the mountains, and the valley shakes the  
mist from her shoulders.  
Far from the river, the sun breaks from the night's cage.  
Stroking the land with its broad fingers, the land wakes, and a  
new day begins.

KELLY JACKSON (9)

## BASED ON A TRUE STORY

That moment, frozen  
     again  
         again  
             again

Play, Rewind.  
 Play, Record  
 "it's procedure."  
 Heartless beasts to catch their kind.

Feeble, fetal figure,  
     crouched,  
         curled,  
             crying

Aching for Stop;  
 Screaming for Stop  
 to the deaf who cannot feel pain,  
 Unbearable, throbbing, slicing pain.

Wide open eyes flash  
     TERROR,  
         HATRED,  
             HELPLESSNESS,

Before the same frightened eyes  
 Seeing crime, feeling crime  
 Time after time  
 For evidence.

Like one sting times  
     2, 0, 0  
         2 million  
             to infinity  
 Stings all over her body,  
 Hallucinations of his hands  
 Filthy, feeling  
 Her trembling frame.

She sees, all see each  
     crashing blow,  
         wretched kiss,  
             abrupt insertion,  
 Exposed to the world, a victim  
 Wants to die  
 In the grasp of Fear,  
 Die forgotten by Hope.

Off. Eyes to her, huddled  
     in the corner,  
         in the court,  
             in Hell,  
 Never escaping the nightmare  
 Haunting the gushing black in the chambers,  
 Black, cold, black blood of a terrified heart.

Beast, through the glass,  
     thick neck,  
         dark hair,  
             scarred lip,

"That's him there."  
 She's sure. She should know,  
 He lives within her now.  
 Once, forever in her.

## GRANDDADDY

Four eyes locked, staring  
 Through the glare of a glossy,  
 Iridescent reflection  
 forming a fractal of pupils.  
 Numbers increase dramatically  
 Like Malthus's population principle  
 Two pairs, four eyes, eight  
 Legs of a spider.  
 Long-legged daddy stands grand  
 On the wall,  
 Hovering above the mourning family.  
 Each member, an appendage  
 From his aged exoskeleton.  
 Crushed, burned, buried  
 With a stroke  
 Of the six-foot, freestanding clock.

Eight legs to transport,  
 But this does not explain  
 Your presence and relation  
 To this black-clad room  
 Did you catch a ride  
 On their backs,  
 Weaving your threadlike legs  
 Through their dark fibers?  
 Yes... you crawled out  
 Of the hole we dug.

A reincarnate soul  
 With eight agile legs  
 To compensate for the two  
 Paralyzed in your previous life,  
 Unredeemable because of a loophole  
 In the corrupted system.  
 A clot on the brain  
 That blotted out the memories  
 Of the time we used to capture  
 Insects in a translucent urn.  
 Watch them gasping for oxygen.  
 We, Breathsavers, would resuscitate them,  
 Making a high-pitched noise  
 As the forked utensil struck  
 And punctured the aluminum.  
 Even with intensive care,  
 I couldn't make you remember this  
 Or my name.

Now, with your new,  
 Speckled body,  
 Oval like the Easter eggs  
 We used to hide  
 But couldn't find after the hunt,  
 You levitate six feet above us  
 In the corner, incommunicado, yet again,  
 Eyes weaving web-like through the room,  
 Watching us fill the void  
 Of our stomachs with the food  
 That sympathizing acquaintances sent,  
 Swallowing our grief  
 So that we can provide  
 A firm shoulder  
 For your other leftovers.



## GONE AWAY

Mist cleared, releasing pain out of its void,  
like the clearing sea-clouds  
revealing the loss of Palinurus.  
Black cars and mourners clothed in black  
covered the cemetery and its decaying leaves  
like a picnic blanket wrinkling down  
hiding all objects except  
the rectangular hole.

One stood alone in a hunter's pink coat  
puffing out the low off-key hunt song.  
My father, a hunter since five,  
died days before, six months after diagnosis.  
Surrounded by the wails of mourners  
my inner sanctum was invaded  
with Roman funeral rites  
frenzied crowds beating their breast.  
My mind's navigator was put to sleep by death  
and tossed into a turbulent sea  
like Aeneas' helmsman

Gathered friends wept with fright  
At being stricken with a loss.  
The feeling blended with my father's crowd  
on a damp November afternoon.  
The Aeneas-like parson soothed  
my corrosive feelings of failure.

A noble man was gone,  
mortality remembered  
Silently I muttered:  
"Forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit."  
hoping, one day, truly I would be glad to remember.

## TO MY ADOPTION DOLL

You were born on Christmas,  
born to look just like me  
with your long, black yarn hair  
and big, brown eyes.  
Your belly button was always full  
like mine after mommy fed me.  
You sat with me,  
smiled at me,  
played with me,  
listened while I spoke of little girl nonsense.  
The family even had real chocolate cake  
for your birthday.

You loved me like you were real,  
and your love gave me security.  
I wanted more love,  
more security,  
more dolls.  
And then I raided the cabbage patch.  
I never loved them  
like I loved you.  
They didn't hug as well  
because their plastic heads  
were hard against my own.

Tonight, when I see you  
staring at me  
from the back of my closet,  
I'm sorry that I abandoned you.  
And I confess that when I pick you up,  
I soak your innocence into my body,  
that innocence we used to share.  
I'm jealous of what you still hold.



KELLY WILLIAMS (12)



## ANDREA'S BUTTERFLY

Today I saw something  
I forgot even existed.  
I found myself numb,  
washed over with a feeling of nausea,  
as though I was aboard a capsizing boat,  
and the horizon spun completely around me.  
I closed my eyes from the enormity of the death,  
yet I see explosions,  
like fireworks, in the darkness.  
In a fleeting second it all vanishes,  
but I know that when I next remember,  
my friends, the nausea and the explosions  
will come to visit me again.

I found a child's plastic barrette;  
A periwinkle blue butterfly,  
so small, it's barely useful.  
When I try to secure barrettes like these  
in my thick, unruly mass of curly hair,  
I find, a few minutes later,  
the barrette has slipped,  
and my hair tumbles loose like water from a faucet.  
It seems as though the butterfly  
wants my hair to fly free  
since it's frozen to the barrette  
and not real anyway.

Barrettes come in pairs.  
I left the other periwinkle blue butterfly  
at her house this past August.  
I sewed the ribbons and elastic  
on her new toe shoes  
while we talked.  
"Do you remember when you sat on the couch  
that was striped in the same colors  
as your striped leggings?  
Your legs just disappeared,  
camouflaged perfectly.  
And you were always coloring.  
Coloring books and packages of Crayola Crayons  
seem to be your vice.  
You never gave them up like I did."

It's been a month now, exactly.  
I wish I could make sure her butterfly  
is not in some drawer or medicine cabinet,  
forever lost in a teen-age girl's bathroom.  
She's not practicing her tour-jetes here.  
She's not on the other end of my phone line.  
I know you're still coloring, aren't you?



## FIFTEEN'S RAIN

She lies in bed, an old t-shirt the only clothing between her body and the Star Wars sheets; sheets that have been a part of her life since she was nine. She stretches her arm out above her head, like a newborn yawning, and stares at her hand. Like dominoes falling or the opening and closing of a paper fan, her fingers tumble about. A silhouette against blackness, her hand and its dance is a replica of her mother's thirty years before. But her mother had been a young seventeen then, while the daughter who lays in bed now, though only fifteen, was already a girl tired of her age. Experienced in petty danger, smoking had become a chore; the rush of nicotine's allure replaced by habit.

She longs to be twenty and glamorous. Smudgy, newspaper print models in the living section of the paper are the Queen Nefertiti's in her mind, for they possess legs that are never unshaven and clothes that wrinkles fear. She turns over on her stomach and the doorbell of dull pain rings; her breasts are still at thirteen, sore and tender like a baby's gums when teething. Accentuating her petite waist are the hips that every day seem to rebel more against society's standards. Her mother calls them a child-bearer's dream, but to her they are more like a swimsuit's comedy act.

Her parents tell her that in the future she'll become a blossoming butterfly, yet somehow she can't help but feel like a worm, forever underfoot and only noticed when it rains. Looking at her hands now, she begins to imagine if boys will ever kiss her there, a place where hormones can't be invited to ruin the romance of imagination's instigation of an innocent affair, an affair in which she will truly view herself as the young woman her book of manners continuously tells her she can become. Yet this book of knowledge that she has kept by her bedside for two years now, fails to reveal the answers to the questions she poses to herself at night. The boyfriend whom she confuses, the mother she loves and can't ever live up to, and the father who is at a loss, makes for a little girl striving for adulthood and an adult crawling back to her Legos and smelly markers.

Picking up her sister's glow worm, a toy left behind during the day, she squeezes its belly and winces at the neon light its head produces. Glancing at her hands once more, she sees the jammed thumb, with its slightly large knuckle, and the nails painted by instruction from a magazine. Soon she begins to wonder where her favorite stuffed lamb has gone, and moving her feet around down at the bottom of the covers, she feels him, warm and worn from fifteen years of use. Pulling him up close to her, she wraps her arms tightly around his thick body and tries hard to go to sleep.



## THE SCARRING

She the pyro burned each candle  
No matter the poison until  
The wax dripped all it could handle,  
And not Satisfied still,  
She found a new, forgot the old,  
"Til the candles were too heavy  
For my exhausted heart to hold;  
Her scar was burnt inside me.

He the crippled used all things  
As crutches to help him get by;  
He promised a catch for my fall,  
Falsifying my eye,  
His eyes searched for the perfect one  
Whom he could use to be consoled  
He silently crept and was gone;  
His scar left my heart crippled.

She the fairy dazzled the world,  
Casting spells powered by beauty;  
Everyone around her was curled,  
None were able to see,  
But her sly strength was destructive  
She'd strip your personality  
But hers she'd willingly give;  
She scarred my identity.

Now the pyro has burned herself,  
The crippled fell flat on his face,  
The fairy fell under a spell;  
I was my scars remain in place.

LIZ LIGON (11)

## PIG-SKIN

Her breasts are tanned by the artificial UV-rays and resemble the color of furniture newly stained with Murphy's oil. Her curves plunge forth from the carved "V" in the neckline of her midnight blue shirt. The girl right beside her is wearing the same shirt but in a different color and her breasts also float above her V-neck by some miracle of a bra. With a horizontal scan of the eye, one can spot four of these pairs, arranged in the same setting, across the third row of the cold, metal bleachers. The girls' eyes move back and forth, following the players that throw a blimp-shaped ball made from the skin of their ancestors. Both the girls and the players know that if the players make this touchdown, it will not be the only way they'll score tonight.

But the girl in the blue V-neck is distracted from her fantasies of the post-game rendezvous, and she watches the game intently, calculating the yardage as the pass is thrown; she prays the right player will catch it. The ball bounces... and so do the breasts as three of the girls in V-necks cheer, unaware of the broken play. In a moment's time, the ball is recovered; the three girls wait for the rest of the spectators on their side to cheer before they become excited. The girl in blue smiles a smile of momentary satisfaction for the salvaged play; the owners of the other pairs of breasts smile a smile of future satisfaction.

The girl's smiles escalate to "Permagrins," as the players strut out of the locker room, freshly showered and ready to work up a sweat. Three of the pairs of breasts are reduced to giggles, but the fourth pair fills with pride as the star player, an All-American tight-end, enters the parking lot and scans the crowd of excited girls and players for her familiar pair of... breasts. The players and breasts quickly pair off and leave the school's parking lot in their four-wheel drive vehicles in search of another place to park, where the players can have a better view... of the breasts.

BETH WALTEMATH (12)



## BROTHER

He is my Noah.  
He took me in when danger approached.  
The rain of problems flooded me  
and he stood by,  
ever watchful.  
He built me a boat to sail  
the sea of life.  
He saved me when I surely  
would have drowned.

JENNIFER CRANTS (12)

## LESSON NUMBER ONE

When he calls, don't let him know you miss him;  
Tell him the distance has made you stronger,  
That last week left you without misery;  
You don't need just his kiss any longer.

But tonight the movie you saw had two  
kids fall in love, right there on the t.v.  
You start to think about a second time  
around with him, and so your heart retrieves  
for itself, that first love and seduction.

But you start to recall that loneliness  
leaves in time, and first loves are just special;  
they will always prick you with memories.  
so then you turn off the television,  
And walk away from something that was there.

LACEY GALBRAITH (12)

## FOR R. P. "FLOSS"

I sit in the Senior House with eight other girls,  
watching some talk show about abuse or something.  
I move from face to face in our circle of chairs,  
looking to find someone who's awake.  
Graphic details about a sawed-off shotgun,  
and I'm up and out of that room before my legs even know it.

There's an empty chair in the next room; no T.V. but a radio.  
The room is talking about colleges.  
There's a girl with an acceptance letter  
and another with scholarships waiting for her.  
I move from face to face again; is anyone listening when they speak?  
I didn't know that she was applying  
to two of the same colleges I am. My colleges. My places.  
Up and out of there.

I follow the wet sidewalk across the campus,  
through the gazebo garden, down the steps with no rail.  
Guess I'll go paint. Paint. Paint.  
My canvas is huge, the biggest so far.  
There wasn't any wall space left except  
for under the stairs, in the dark, dimly-lit stairwell  
that echoes with giggling girls. Giggling girls.  
Feel like I'm painting a camouflaged-skinned woman.  
Ugly colors. Ugly colors. Ugly colors.  
She's sitting in water - a lake perhaps - but somehow it doesn't work.  
Submerged in water, I'll make her drown.  
Ha, ha. Morbid painting  
Giggling girls. Giggling girls.

KELLY WILLIAMS (12)



## SEARCHING FOR BELIEF

I once knew this woman who was amazing. She was a nun. Sister Nina was her name. I was her student in more ways than one. My young mind, not yet independent in its thoughts, was tender and waiting to be molded. She molded it into something that would cherish God as my father. I didn't know what the significance of a god was back then. All I knew was that my dream was to be chosen to read Bible passages at Chapel. I could belt out those lines in the microphone and make her proud. I wanted to be Mary in the Christmas play because she got to hold the baby doll that looks so real. She also got to wear that pretty white and blue dress and sing a song in front of everyone. But year after year, I just watched all the Marys do their thing. I remember sitting in the pews looking up as the sun streamed in like flowing milk through the stained glass windows. It was like God was talking to me through light because the golden hue was gleaming through Jesus. He looked especially nice when he was all lit up like that. But as mass after mass was performed, and I tried desperately to be Catholic because it was the only thing Sister Nina had taught me to be, I slowly found that I didn't belong in her religion. I never got to take communion or process in the masses. All I did was watch. Children get tired of watching. And so I was left with no god, and no religion, confused in my attempts to talk to a greater Being. No one responded to my prayers so I gave up. Now I see that Sister Nina was not telling me to love "her" God. She was not forcing her religion on me. I was not expected to be in her religion. All she wanted was for me to love a god, just like I loved her and the sunshine coming through Jesus. But even as I realize this, I feel that it is too late to find a religion. I don't exactly want to. I like keeping my option open. Open minded is what most people like to call it. Instead of praying and going to church and reading the Bible, I think about the people I love and show them that I love them. If only I could see Sister Nina again to show her that I've found my own god. I believe she would be proud of me. I believe, I believe.

ANJALI SHENAI (12)



ALLISON BISHOP (11)



## SHADOWS

When the day tires, and sunlight stretches,  
Its skewing rays distorting the living world, exposing  
And tacking hidden images onto the ground magnified,  
I look to see myself embedded on the grass.  
I do not see one image,  
I see two.

They are two dimensional figures,  
but at this moment, like so many,  
They spring to life in full color  
Immortalized in my mind.  
One stands frozen in the innocent  
Beauty of childhood's apex,  
Golden hair, before it browns,  
Nimble perfect features  
Marred by no humility  
Or worries of imperfection,  
Mind untempered by conventional thought.  
The other image is nearly beyond  
The height of these worries,  
On the cusp of maturity, ready to release  
The control that has guided and protected  
But that now binds her,  
Like a shadow to another pair of feet.

For no reason but fate, tragedy, bad luck  
These images were not destined  
To leave the life of a silhouette  
Cast onto the ground by someone else.  
But I am.  
I am quickly approaching the time  
When my feet are freed  
And with reluctance  
There are no more Peter Pans  
Or Wendys, trying frantically  
To stitch the shadow back into its place.

But there are still two images  
Bound to me.  
and it is their murky outlines  
Traced in hopes, screams, illusions, and tears  
Which, when caught in certain rays,  
meld into one black figure  
and make me three-dimensional



## WHEN SLEEP BRINGS DREAMS OF HOME

When I was a little girl in school, learning the Golden Rule, I often dreamt myself away to the place where candles are born and waterfalls never die.

Away to a place where pinwheels would grow and blow in fields that stretched to the horizon, where glow sticks never ran out of glow or waterguns of water, and fireflies live through the night in the jars you catch them in.

A place where school is always Third Grade and your friends still call a night in advance to ask you to come over to 'play' the next day. Cursive and Long Division are the bane of your existence because when will you ever need them in the future?

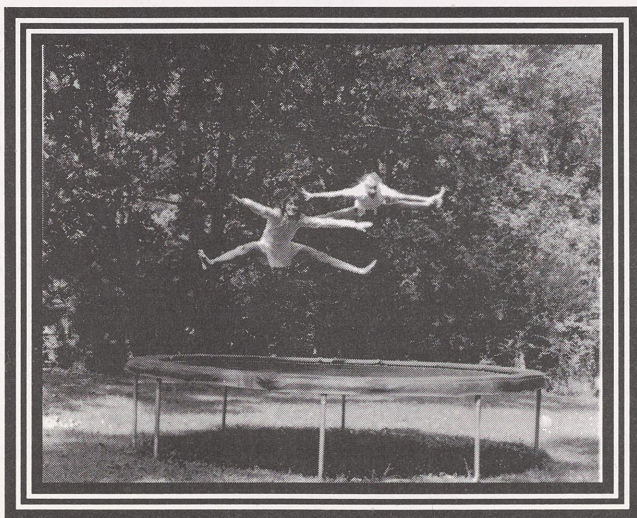
Everyone wears the red ANNIE dress with the white belt and tights, black strapped shoes, and heart locket, and hours pass like the spin of a frisbee.

Where brothers don't play evil tricks on you like telling you that the green potato chips are lucky or that you should never eat the ends of a banana or hot dog because you would be eating their butts.

A place where every broken sky-blue robin's egg is a treasure, G.I. Joe and Rainbow Bright are an intricate part of your life, and popsicles do actually break into two who pieces instead of both on one and a gooey stick.

Away to a place where Crayons breath life, bubbles don't burst, goldfish don't die, the Rice Krispie language is taught in school, every wish for a pony is granted, the Tooth Fairy still exists, and sleep brings dreams of home.

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## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SAFETY PINS

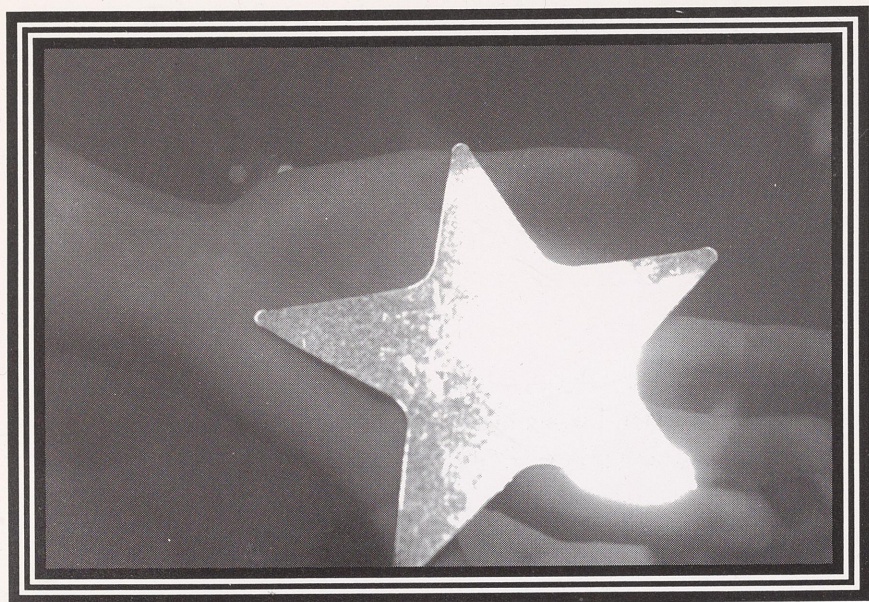
My mother says I hold my life together with safety pins. That statement projects into my mind an image of myself, looking quite contented, with a gigantic chrome-colored safety pin poking into my bellybutton and exiting somewhere between two vertebrae in my lower back. Painful as it may seem, this simple device, holding my body together, seems to be a great source of security for Me that lives in my head.

My mother's assessment of one of my many quirks seems to hold an element of truth. When I was a little girl, I would fashion makeshift dresses for my dolls with scraps of fabric and safety pins. Even now my closet practically sparkles with little gold or silver slivers of metal. My oldest uniform skirt has no hem or closing button aside from my chain of safety pins. Over the years, I have become extremely adept at hiding them in folds, loops, creases, seams, etc., in all of my clothes. I even keep a little dish of them behind a stack of books on my bedside table.

In all of my experimentation and poked fingers, I have discovered that safety pins do not hold drastically different weaves of fabric together. They tend to slip through the holes between the strands of yarn of loosely woven sweaters and such. While these little stainless steel works of genius are profoundly useful for holding my uniforms together, they were obviously not crafted for holding the threadbare and thickly woven pieces of my life together, contrary to what my mother says. With worries about where I'm going to college and whether or not there's anyone out there who *really* understands, my thought processes and experiences aren't coherent enough for even a safety pin to help. The heap of miscellaneous scraps and velvets which compose my present life do not, no matter how many safety pins I use, seem to fit together as neatly as I would like them to. I just keep thinking that safety pins are so good for so many things that I don't want to stop trying to make my life somehow more cohesive.

My mother says my brother holds his life together with Scotch tape. I'm wondering if he might have the right idea.





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